



Susan Bysiewicz  
SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
CONNECTICUT

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- NEWS RELEASE -

## **BYSIEWICZ JOINS CONNECTICUT IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE COALITION TO HONOR 15 IMMIGRANTS WHO HAVE MADE REMARKABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONNECTICUT**

11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CEREMONY SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>

**HARTFORD:** Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz will join the Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition (CIRC) in hosting the 11<sup>th</sup> annual “Immigrant Day” at the State Capitol Tuesday, April 15, 2008, a day to honor immigrants from throughout Connecticut who have made valuable contributions to their communities and/or professions.

“Immigrants are the mortar and glue that built this country and made it strong,” said Bysiewicz. “I hope this Immigrant Day will encourage all residents to pause and recognize the vital role immigrants have had, and continue to have, in Connecticut. I congratulate all the honorees and their families.”

Secretary Bysiewicz will join in honoring 15 immigrants from 14 different countries in the Old Judiciary Room on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the State Capitol at 1 p.m.

A complete list of honorees, including an East Hartford High School student, can be found at the end of the news release.

This year’s keynote speaker and honoree is Tariq Farid. Mr. Farid is Founder, President and Chief Executive Officer of Edible Arrangements International, Inc., the industry leader of high quality, artistically designed fresh fruit arrangements. Mr. Farid launched the first Edible Arrangements store in 1999 in East Haven, Connecticut. In the following seven years, Edible Arrangements has grown to over 800 stores located throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, the United Kingdom, Dubai and opening soon in other international markets. It has been named by *Inc. Magazine* as one of America’s fastest-growing privately held businesses in

America and one of the top franchise systems in Entrepreneur Annual Franchise 500 magazine. In 2001 Mr. Farid founded Netsolace, Inc., a computer software distributor for the franchise industry located in Hamden, Connecticut. Mr. Farid was born in Pakistan in 1969, immigrated to the U.S. at age 11, grew up in West Haven, Connecticut and became a United States citizen in 1986. Mr. Farid is currently developing the Salma K. Farid Academy, a not-for-profit learning and community center, to honor the wishes of his late mother, whom he credits as the inspiration for his success.

“I am very excited to honor so many deserving men, women, and students who have been chosen as the awardees for the 11<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Immigrant Day. The Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition advocates for fair and just policies affecting refugees and immigrants who have made this country and our state of Connecticut a shining example of cultural diversity for the entire world,” commented Robert J. Fishman, President of the Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition (CIRC) and Executive Director of the Jewish Federation Association of Connecticut (JFACT).

Immigrant Day is an annual event sponsored by the Connecticut Immigrant and Refugee Coalition (CIRC) and the Secretary of the State’s Office.

The general public may RSVP by contacting Robert Fishman at (860) 727-5701 or [jfact@mcmgmt.com](mailto:jfact@mcmgmt.com).

<u>Honoree</u>	<u>Country of Origin</u>	<u>CT Residence</u>
<b>Keynote Speaker and Honoree</b>		
1. Tariq Farid	Pakistan	Cheshire
<b>Student Honoree</b>		
2. Juliana Isufaj	Albania	East Hartford
<b>Honorees</b>		
3. Ram Aberasturia	Cuba	East Hartford
4. Vinka Bogdan	Bosnia	Bloomfield
5. Father Joseph Cheah	Burma	Avon
6. Joyce Hamilton Henry	Jamaica	Middletown
7. William Alexander Howe	Canada	Glastonbury
8. Joseph Korzenik	Poland	West Hartford
9. Ester Sanches-Naek	Brazil	Tolland
10. Aleksandra Nawakowski	Poland	Windsor

11. Stephanos Nousiopoulos	Greece	New London
12. James Hansen-Quartey	Ghana	West Haven
13. Maria Nohemy Rojas	Colombia	Hartford
14. Rebecca Thomas, PhD	India	West Hartford
15. Mohamed Turay	Sierra Leone	New Haven